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Inside Information

ILLINOIS INF. OFFICIALS TAKE USDA POSITIONS

Two Illinois Department of Agriculture information officials have taken positions with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

John Ochs, former Illinois agriculture information director, is now press secretary to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture John Block.

Dave Lane, former information officer with IDA, is now assisting Ochs in handling press relations for the new Secretary of Agriculture in Washington, D.C.

Both grew up on farms--Ochs in Illinois and Lane in Indiana.

Ochs is an agricultural journalism graduate from the University of Illinois.

He is a former assistant farm editor and front page editor of the Bloomington (Illinois) Daily Pantograph.

Before going to work for IDA in November 1979, Ochs worked as an information officer for the Illinois Farm Bureau.

Lane majored in journalism and radio at Purdue University.

He was an agricultural writer and assistant night editor of the Peoria (Illinois) Journal Star for a number of years before joining the IDA.

Prior to that, Lane worked for radio stations and newspapers in Illinois and Indiana.

Both Ochs and Lane work in the Office of the Secretary. They work closely with USDA's Office of Governmental & Public Affairs, particularly the news and broadcast-staffs.

GPO OFFERS PRINTING COURSE IN JUNE

The U.S. Government Printing Office's "Editorial Planning for Printing Production" seminar is presented quarterly.

Enrollment for the June 15-18 class is now underway, according to Warren Bell, acting head of the Printing Center in USDA's Office of Governmental & Public Affairs.

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AG RESEARCH INFORMATION TO BE EMPHASIZED

Agricultural research has changed the world. The United States has led in agricultural research and in getting it applied in the field.

But the Senate Appropriations Committee reminds everyone that there is still a big job to do.

The Committee directed USDA's Office of Governmental & Public Affairs to "implement a coordinated program to educate the general public on the value, contribution and conduct of agricultural research activities..."

A committee to do just that has been formed in USDA and began meeting recently.

Chaired by Ted Crane, head of GPA's Special Programs Center, the committee includes information directors from several agencies.

They are Alice Skelsey, Science & Education Administration; Ben Blankenship, Economics & Statistics Service; Bob Lake, Forest Service; and Hubert Kelley, Soil Conservation Service.

Also serving on the committee are Larry Marton and John Crowley of the Special Programs Center staff.

First step is to assess what is already being done--which is considerable.

Some ideas for the future also have been batted around at initial meetings, such as open houses across the country, basic speech material, articles in top magazines, etc.

Secretary of Agriculture John Block repeatedly states the need for continuing agricultural research and urges its strengthening.

Crane says the team could use some fresh examples and ideas from around the country.

If anyone has any ideas, contact him at (202) 447-5163, or in Room 536-A, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC 20250.

TOP USDA OFFICIALS CONFIRMED, NOMINATED

Only three top officials of the U.S. Department of Agriculture have been officially confirmed by the U.S. Senate and appointed to their positions as of March 20.

They are Secretary John Block, Deputy Secretary Richard Lyng and Assistant Secretary for marketing and transportation C. W. "Bill" McMillan.

Other top USDA officials have been nominated by the President, but have not yet been confirmed by the Senate.

They are:

Under Secretary for international affairs and commodity programs, Seeley Lodwick.

Under Secretary for rural development, Frank Naylor.

Assistant Secretary for conservation and environmental programs, John Crowell.

Assistant Secretary for agricultural economics, William Lesher.

Assistant Secretary for food and consumer services, Mary Jarratt.

General Counsel, James Barnes.

Two top policy positions remained unchanged:

Assistant Secretary for management services Joan Wallace and Director for science and education Anson Bertrand.

No one has been nominated yet for the position of Assistant Secretary for governmental and public affairs.

GPO Printing Course -- continued

The course is provided to help government writers and editors, administrators associated with these fields, those who prepare specifications for use in requisitioning printing from GPO, and those who are required to work with GPO as department or agency procurement officers.

Nominations are to be made through the agency's training or personnel office by submitting a training form or a letter to the Superintendent, Typography and Design, Room C846, U.S. Government Printing Office, 732 North Capitol Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20401.

Although deadline is June 5, the class is already half full, says Bell. Therefore, anyone interested in taking the course in June should get their application in just as soon as possible.

For further information, contact Mrs. Moore at 275-2132.

USDA RULES ISSUED FOR HONORARIUMS

To assist USDA officials in determining how to react to various situations which may present themselves in the future, Secretary of Agriculture John Block issued guidelines which apply to all USDA employees.

No outside employment or activity should be engaged in which would result in a conflict of interest, or the appearance of a conflict of interest with an employee's official duties, Secretary Block said.

No payment may be accepted for any activity which draws substantially on official data or ideas.

The Secretary said honorariums may not be accepted in connection with speaking engagements, written articles or radio-television appearances performed as part of an employee's official duties.

This applies to payments made directly or indirectly to a charitable organization, as well as direct payments or payments-in-kind for accommodations, travel or other expenses for the employee or members of his or her family.

The prohibition does not preclude the acceptance of honorariums or reimbursement for expenses in connection with any engagement or activity performed entirely outside the bounds of one's official responsibilities as a USDA employee.

"This exception would not extend, of course, to appearances before groups of agricultural producers or other trade associations or special interest groups whose concerns are directly affected by activities of USDA," Secretary Block said.

"The exception also would not allow invitations extended because of the employee's USDA position or official duties."

Any questions concerning conflict of interest situations should be referred to agency employee relations personnel, or where necessary, to the Office of General Counsel's Mike Kelly (447-7219).

IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING...

Although recent issues of the Federal Register have been small in size, the January 19 issue was the largest ever printed.

The U.S. Government Printing Office says the unprecedeted issue of 1,210 pages was printed in three books.

Three consecutive issues of January 16, 19 and 20 totaled nine books of 3,114 pages--with 2.7 million impressions.
